(d) the action taken by Government to check it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) According to the information received from the Delhi Police, no illegal arms trade in Delhi's eastern border villages has come to notice recently.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Setting up National Security Council

1049. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have had under consideration the proposal to set up a National Security Council to evolve a comprehensive national security programme and to keep a constant vigil on security environment both internal and external and to monitor the implementation of such security programmes; and

(b) if so, the decision has since been taken thereon indicating precisely the constitution and functions of the contemplated Council?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) The National Security Council was set up on 24th August, 1990, with the Prime Minister as its Chairman and Ministers of Finance, Defence, Home Affairs and External Affairs as members. The main endeavour of the National Security Council is to evolve an integrated approach to policy making as it effects national security, taking account of the linkages between the evolving external situation in the political, military and economic fields and our domestic situation.

Scrapping of old vessels by Shipping Corporation of India

1050. SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of old vessels scrapped by the Shipping Corporation of India during the last five years;

(b) the number of new vessels inducted in the fleet of SCI during that period;

(c) the time taken (berthing period) before declaring each vessel as scrap;

(d) the charge paid for berthing due to the delay in decision making; and

(e) the total earning on this account during this period?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) The Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. (SCI) had disposed off 24 vessels and acquired 22 vessels during the last five years.

(c) and (d) The SCI has reported that an everage time of 9-10 weeks was taken from the lay up of the vessel till a decision was taken by the SCI to dispose off the vessel. There was no delay in decision making and as such no charges were paid on this account.

(e) Rs. 113.37 crore was realised from the sale of these ships.

Meeting of SAARC Countries

1051. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some next meeting of SAARC countries is proposed to be held in August, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof with issues of agenda to be discussed;

(c) whether such a meeting will boost concessional trade between India and Pakistan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof; and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The scond meeting of the Second Round of Inter-Government Negotiations on Trade Liberalisation under the South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) has been proposed to be held in Pakistan in August, 1996. The exact dates have not yet been announced.

(b) Pursuant to the decision of the SAARC Council of Ministers following the operationalisation of the South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) on 7th December, 1995, a Second Round of negotiations on Trade Liberalisation is currently in Progress. The first meeting under the Second Round was held at Colombo on 14-15 March,

1996. The second meeting will continue the negotiations begun during the Colombo meeting. Issues on the agenda of the meeting include expanding the lists of items offered for intra- SAARC trade under preferential tariffs, and to further deepen the tariff concessions already offered after the First Round of negotiations. The latter cover 226 items of trade, which are included in the Consolidated Schedules. The meeting will also examine modalities for addressing non-tariff and para-tariff barriers to trade on items covered under the Consolidated Schedules.

(c) Availability of concessional preferential tariffs is intended to provide incentives to traders in India and Pakistan to expand their bilateral trade by making it competitive boosting of concessional trade will be dependent upon development of the trading regime between the two countries.

(d) Results of the meeting can be evaluated only after it is held. It is possible that the Second Round of negotiations may not be completed during the next meeting.

Decline in Garments Exports to U.S.

1052. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in utilisation of quota of exports of garments to the U.S.A.;

(b) if so, the trends in the utilisation of garment quota during the last three years;

(c) the decline in utilising the quota in dollar terms during January—August, 1995 as compared to the same period during 1994;

(d) the factors responsible for this state of affairs; and

(e) the measures taken by Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (d) There has been no decline in the utilisation of export quotas of garments to the U.S.A in the current year.

(c) to (e) Garment export quotas are fixed in quantitative terms. The total value realised in Dollar terms for quota exports during January—August, 1995 to the USA was lower than that for the corresponding period during 1994. The reasons for this were economic recession and the slump in retailing activity in the U.S. market.

Government have been taking a number of steps to step up the export of garments from India to all the importing countries, including the U.S.A., which comprise inter-alia encouraging exporters to participate in buyer-seller meets, fairs and exhibitions; enabling import of capital goods at concessional duty for export production; special arrangements for duty free import of raw materials for export production; ensuring increased availability of export credit etc.

मध्य प्रदेश में एस. टी. डी. सुविधा

1053. **श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव:** क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) मध्य प्रदेश के रायगढ़, सरगुजा और शहडोल जिलों में किन-किन स्थानों पर एस टी डी. सुविधाओं से युक्त टेलीफोन उपलब्ध हैं;

(ख) इन जिलों में अन्य कौन-कौन से ऐसे स्थान हैं जहां वर्ष 1995—96 के दौरान ऐसी सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराई गई है और वर्ष 1996-97 के दौरान उपलब्ध कराए जाने की योजना है;

(ग) एस॰ टी॰ डी॰ सुविधायुक्त ऐसे कौन-कौन से स्थान हैं जिन्हें पृथक-पृथक उपग्रह प्रणाली से और आप्टिकल फाइवर केबल प्रणाली से जोड़े जाने हेतु प्रस्ताव स्वीकृत किए गए हैं; और

(घ) इस संबंध में अब तक की गई कार्यवाही और प्राप्त उपलब्धियों का ब्यौरा क्या है?

संचार मंत्री (श्री बेनी प्रसाद वर्मा): (क) ब्यौरे विवरण में दिए गए हैं (नीचे देखिए)

(ख) इन जिलों के स्थानों को सूची जहां 1995-96 के दौरान एसटीडी प्रदान को गई है और 1996-97 के दौरान एसटीडी से जोड़ने के लिए प्रस्तावित स्थानों की सूची विवरण-II में दी गई है (नीचे देखिए)

(ग) ब्यौरे विवरण-III में दिये गये हैं (नीचे देखिए)

(घ) (i) सरगुजा और शहडोल जिलों को एसटीडी प्रदान करने की दृष्टि से कटनी-शहडोल-रामनुजगंज आप्टिकल फाइबर केबल रूट का कार्य प्रगति पर है और इसके मार्च, 97 तक पूरा हो जाने की संभावना है।